

## **RTF 420-1 Film Theory, Take home final**

Exam due Tuesday June 8, 9 am in my RTF mailbox (215 AMS), and e-mailed to me the same day. Anything coming in later will get an incomplete.

Write an essay of 10 -12 pp. (3000 to 3500 words) on **one** of the following.

Use as a foundation one chapter from Cassetti's *Theories of Cinema, 1945-1995*, or one chapter from Aumont, et al, *Aesthetics of Film*, or two or more chapters (they are very short) from Stam's *Film Theory: an introduction*. [For Stam, for example the chapters on Brecht and reflexivity could go together, or Third Cinema and Postcolonial Cinema].

For Group A you should refer to at least five articles/book chapters which you know well to back up your points. At least one of the five should be from the 'teens and 20's period, and another from the 40s and 50's period. You may want to use one or more films as major reference points for your argument. Check with Chuck on the films/tapes you want to use.

For Group B, compare and contrast the articles and develop an argument in relation to issues raised in the course..

### **Group A**

1. Discuss various theorists who argue in one way or another that "style creates meaning." support your analysis with a detailed analysis of one scene from a film.
2. Discuss the concepts of self-reflexivity and defamiliarization as you see them in several theorists and different works. Refer to Dana Polan's essay, "A Brechtian Cinema? Towards a Politics of Self-Reflexive Film" in Nichols, M&M, vol 2. (on **Duck Amuck**)
3. There is a long standing aesthetic position that holds art is finally ineffable. Linked often to ideas of its origins in magic, ritual, and religious expression. Romantic era notions of genius and creativity articulated by Kant, and Schlegel and Coleridge, assume the mind of the artist is the source of creation. This is an **expressive** theory which validates the artist, but which also finds the cognitive response of the audience a related phenomenon. It tends to treat art as a special realm not holding to the rules of verisimilitude and ordinary society, and it regards art experience as a unique aspect of human consciousness with art providing a special way of knowing. Discuss these ideas and how you see them developed and expressed in 20th Century film theory.

4, First articulated by Plato, is the idea that art is based on **imitation** (mimesis). Such a position leads thinking along the lines of how such imitation takes place and whether or not a work of art is adequate to the task. It is at the foundation of questions of realism and also ideas that the audience regards the work of art with the same general framework as it regards life. Discuss these notions of realism with particular reference to Bazin, but include consideration of how postmodern works such as **Meeting of Two Queens** might be considered from this perspective.

## **Group B**

### **9. The Progressive Text**

Jean-Louis Comolli & Paul Narboni, "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism" *Screen* Spring 1971 (12:1) 27-36.

Barbara Klinger, "'Cinema/Ideology/Criticism' Revisited: The Progressive Text," *Screen*. 30-44

### **10. Third World/Third Cinema**

required--Solanas, Fernando, and Octavio Gettino. "Towards a Third Cinema." *Movies and Methods*. Ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: U of CA Press, 1976. 22-30.

Pines, Jim, and Paul Willemen, ed. *Questions of Third Cinema*. London: British Film Institute, 1989. various articles--choose one

Stam, Robert, and Louise Spence. "Colonialism, Racism, and Representation: An Introduction." *Movies and Methods II*. Ed. Bill Nichols. Berkeley: U of CA Press, 1985. 2: 632-649

### **11. "Brechtian" analysis**

MacCabe, Colin. "'Realism and the Cinema: Notes on some Brechtian Theses'." *Screen* 15.2 (Summer 74) (1974):

MacCabe, Colin. "Principles of Realism and Pleasure." *Screen* 17.3 (Autumn 76) (1976):

### **12. Costume/Fashion**

required: Jane Gaines, "Fabricating the Female Body" and "Costume and Narrative: How Dress Tells the Woman's Story" and other articles from Gaines, *Fabrications: Costume and the Female Body*

Stella Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema, Clothing and Identity in the Movies* (choose chapter)

Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (choose chapters)

Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies in Fashion*